

I extend my deepest congratulations to Austin Gut for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING CHARLES ALEXANDER VELAZQUEZ

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 18, 2015*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charles Alexander Velazquez. Alex is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 43, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alex has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alex has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alex has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alex installed a 20 foot flagpole for the St. Joseph Youth Soccer Association in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Charles Alexander Velazquez for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN WAYNE HOSS, SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 18, 2015*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Wayne Hoss who is retiring as a Captain in the San Mateo Police Department after 28 years of distinguished service. The San Mateo Police Department relied heavily upon the talents of Captain Hoss over his decades of service, as indicated by the extraordinary range of responsibilities that he held while with the department.

Wayne Hoss worked in every major aspect of department operations, always giving outstanding service. He was initially assigned to patrol and then to Investigations. He kept his investigations skills well-honed throughout his career and later used these skills repeatedly during the times my district office and I relied upon Captain Hoss to respond to security concerns. In addition to working in Investigations, Wayne Hoss also worked in Field Operations, Special Operations, and the Street Crimes Suppression Team. Seeing his talent as an officer, the department assigned Wayne Hoss as a training officer. Noticing that he could manage a computer and other new technology better than many in the department, probably including many Chiefs and more senior personnel, Wayne Hoss was given oversight of technology-related projects

He conducted neighborhood traffic patrols and worked in the K-9 unit. Narcotics, SWAT, major crimes and internal affairs were also entrusted to Captain Hoss as he rose through the ranks. He also worked on the most serious crimes impacting the community including robbery, homicide and sexual assault. As you can see from this unusually broad list, there were very few responsibilities that he did not have during his 28 years of service to the people of San Mateo. I am sure that he has many stories of difficult situations and also wonderful outcomes from the cases that he handled and the people he touched over these years.

My staff and I found Captain Hoss to be highly responsive. He would anticipate our concerns, raise our awareness about security, and inform us about other activities in the community that we needed to know about in order to do our jobs better. His department noted in its letter to us that he worked hard to build trust with the community. We can say from our own experience that Captain Hoss was exceptional in the thoroughness of his communications and the support that he offered.

San Mateo is a diverse city with a high quality of life. Its success is due in part to the dedication of the men and women of the San Mateo Police Department who face big-city policing challenges but also work in a city with a tight-knit sense of community. As spokesperson for the police department, leader and mentor, Wayne Hoss helped to create this quality of life and the tight relationship that the department has with populations originating from around the globe. I am sure that many of the skills that he demonstrated in San Mateo originated with his service in our nation's armed forces as a military police officer. MP's have to cope with many unusual situations and sometimes extremely dangerous operating conditions. I want to offer my appreciation to this veteran who turned his military experience into service to his neighbors and friends in civilian life.

In closing, I want to salute Captain Hoss upon the occasion of his retirement from the police department and the city that he served. He was a talented carpenter on a team that is adept at getting a tough job done right the first time. Retirement for a professional with enormous talent is merely a stepping stone to the next adventure. We thank Captain Hoss for his time in service to us all and wish him all the best in these next adventurous years.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD AND ERROR PREVENTION ACT

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 18, 2015*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, for nearly 80 years, Social Security has been the bedrock of economic security for American families. Generations of Americans have contributed to Social Security with every paycheck, earning birth-to-death protection for themselves and their families. As a result of their contributions—\$16.1 trillion over Social Security's lifetime—Social Security currently has a \$2.8 trillion surplus.

Social Security benefits are modest—about \$15,000 a year for an average senior and

even less for a disabled worker—but for most recipients, their Social Security paycheck is more than half their monthly income.

As a representative of those Americans and the Ranking Democrat on the Social Security Subcommittee, I believe we have no more important responsibility than to make sure that Americans receive their earned Social Security benefits on time and in full. That means protecting Social Security beneficiaries from criminals and fraudsters who try to scam them out of their benefits, and it also means protecting Social Security's trust funds against fraud and errors so the money is available to pay earned benefits. And it means doing so in a way that does not delay needed benefits for honest, hard-working Americans.

On occasion Social Security will provide a recipient more than they are entitled to. That overpayment rate is only a fraction of one percent (0.22%). Most of these overpayments are due to errors, but a small part is due to fraud. Social Security employees believe—and I agree with them—that we could do more to safeguard Social Security.

Recently the Social Security Administration uncovered fraud conspiracies where Social Security contributions made by honest Americans were stolen to pay benefits to people who didn't earn them. In one of the conspiracies, the ringleaders even instructed people to pretend they were disabled as a result of the tragic events of September 11. Social Security's fraud investigators have also uncovered rings of criminals who electronically divert Americans' Social Security checks into their own bank accounts.

The good news is, when you invest in training highly qualified employees to protect Social Security, it pays off. Social Security's front-line employees uncovered those recent cases of fraud. With the help of Social Security's trained investigators, the ringleaders have been charged with felonies, the beneficiaries have been made whole, and Social Security has begun the process of recovering the money stolen from the trust fund.

But the bad news is that these conspiracies show that Social Security is a tempting target for those willing to break the law. Recent Republican budget cuts have made it harder for Social Security to develop and use effective tools to fight them.

That's why, over a year ago, my colleagues and I decided Congress needed to do its part to protect Social Security. We introduced the Social Security Fraud and Error Prevention Act. Our bill would have given Social Security new tools to find fraud and errors, recoup money that should be in the trust funds, and thrown the book at people who steal from Social Security.

Unfortunately, the Republican leadership in Congress failed to act on our proposal and continued to shortchange Social Security's budget. This lack of leadership has had consequences for Americans.

For example, Republican budget cuts mean Social Security has fewer fraud cops on the beat than it had five years ago. Our bill would guarantee Social Security's fraud-fighting budget, expand SSA's special fraud-busting investigative units to cover all 50 states, and increase prosecutions of people who steal from Social Security.